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State Nature Preserves Commission Awards Highest Honor *WKU professors receive prestigious award*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 10, 2013) – Three Western Kentucky University (WKU) professors are sharing this year's Biological Diversity Protection Award, which recognizes a person, persons or organization that has made a significant contribution to the discovery and protection of Kentucky's biological diversity.

The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission honored Alfred Meier, Ouida Meier and Scott Grubbs for their work in creating the Upper Green River Biological Preserve.

The preserve is located on both banks of the Green River in Hart County, approximately two miles upriver of Mammoth Cave National Park. The mission of the Upper Green River Biological Preserve is to foster knowledge and protection of the river, which is the single most important river in Kentucky for the conservation of rare native mussels and fish, hosting 109 fish species and nearly 60 mussel species.

A single mussel bed is known to include five federally listed endangered mussels. This area is also significant due to an endangered bat species found on the preserve and the riparian corridor, which provides critical breeding and migratory habitat for neotropical songbirds.

Detailed information about the Upper Green River Biological Preserve can be obtained through the Western Kentucky University website: <http://greenriver.wku.edu>. To learn more about the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, please visit their website: <http://naturepreserves.ky.gov> or call the office at (502) 573-2886.

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